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# agricultural marketing

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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

Chicago Stod yards, circa 1905





# The Death of a Stockyard

*View of the Union Stockyards, 1866, from a lithograph by Jeune and Almini, after a drawing by Louis Kurz. Photograph courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society.*



## AN OBITUARY FOR PACKINGTOWN

THERE ARE TIMES when events and phenomena, like the 105-year existence of the Chicago Union Stockyards, grow larger than imagination would have them grow. They encompass fortune and ruin, fathers and sons, lives and livelihoods, the universals that keenly and piercingly touch our humanity.

Words become barren wastelands to explain such unexplainables, and impatiently we discard their emptiness. We struggle for the power and might of the word that defines the proud existence that held destinies within its daily routine; until sadly we realize that what we have witnessed is the passing of an "era."

The Chicago Union stockyards, like any great era, were never to have ended. But this 105-year romance in rawhide has closed this month with all of the muddy dignity and grey, cold bravado that characterized the brawling, gusty market in its heyday.

The hogs are gone, of course. They left last spring. And now the cattle pens and alleys stand empty, too, their occupants herded down the path called progress.

Four major packing companies, Armour, Swift, Wilson, and Cudahy left "Packingtown" over ten years ago, their sites since taken by the smoke stacks of other industries. And as for the rails—well, even yesterday's great iron monster often lies in outdated majesty, listening for the more modern rumble of the livestock truck and the tinny throttle of Chicago's "el."

But the historic Gate of 1879 is still there, that hardy arch of stone that defied the fire of 1934. It almost stands as a monument to the men who have passed beneath it, and the men you'll still find within.

Men like Charles T. Dolan, tall, swarthy commission man who has

spent the past 30 years at the yards.

Even after the closing was announced last fall, Mr. Dolan was out there each day, checking and penning the animals with his long pike and deep-throated yowl.

Or Charles R. Bargquist, hog salesman and 52-year veteran of the yards. At 74, Mr. Bargquist thrives on reminiscences of the days that were.

"I remember one morning, I guess it was about 6:30 or 7," he says, "when I looked down those alleys and saw nothing but livestock. I thought it would be years till they'd all be handled—but by 11, they were gone."

Those crowded pens were the stuff that fortunes and dreams were made of. At one time Gustavus Franklin Swift, founder of the Swift packing chain in 1879, characterized the industry from his practical view point: "We use all of the hog except his grunt."

And 20 years later, a *Saturday Evening Post* writer expressed sheer wonderment at the yards: "Picture a corral bigger than ever the dreams of the most ambitious cattle king of the Western plains have sought to compass; plant it in the heart of America's second city, and you have a suggestion of the splendid picturesqueness of the stock yards of Chicago."

The yards can hardly be called picturesque any longer, but the charisma of 105 years will never suffer the death stroke.

Many centuries ago a Roman writer captured the essence of such a grand, proud sadness. He called it "lacrimarum," "the tears of things."

And in more modern times, an acquaintance of a great man expressed the same overflowing emptiness at his friend's death . . . gone, yes, "but I don't have to believe it if I don't want to." □

By Cheryl A. Palmer

*Miss Palmer, a public information specialist in the C&MS Information Division, visited the Chicago Stockyards in its dying days and prepared this "obituary" for the passing of a part of America's past.*



# TRADITION BOWS TO A CHANGING WORLD

By Roy H. Rockenbach

THE DECLINE OF the terminal market—this phrase has hung like a threatening specter over the livestock industry for the past quarter century. And now the Chicago Union Stockyards have been closed.

What are the implications for the future of livestock marketing?

Many in the industry lament what they see as the passing of a traditional marketing form. Terms like “free and open competition,” “barometer of prices,” “multiple choices,” “inter-rivalry of multiple buyers and multiple sellers,” and “price base” are being tossed about in tones that imply “it’s all over.”

But is it?

First, although the importance of the terminal market *has* waned in the presence of increasing numbers of auction markets and direct sales to packers, the terminal is still with us and still influences the market.

USDA’s livestock market news service provides ample evidence of this.

Administered by USDA’s Consumer and Marketing Service in cooperation

with 20 State departments of agriculture, the market news program closely follows the “pulsebeat” of the market.

Reporters from 55 Federal-State offices cover trading in 23 direct marketing areas (where sales are made by producers and feedlot operators directly to packer representatives) and 170 auction markets across the country. The service also reports daily from a total of 21 terminal markets. (At the larger markets this actually entails three reports daily).

Market news reports show that about a fourth of the slaughter cattle still go through terminal markets, and that prices set at terminals still are valued by the trade.

Secondly, the concepts of competition mentioned above do not apply exclusively to the terminal market. It is true that traditionally they have been associated with terminals. But tradition must not dictate the future and that future may witness the association of these terms with alternate methods of marketing.

By tradition, a chief definition of

the terminal market is “the concentrated assembly of buyers and sellers in the free and open exchange of products”—competition at its peak. Yet a younger school of thought, which has grown up in about the last 20 years, disputes the finality of this definition and discards the “competition-terminal market” syndrome.

What Dean R. L. Kohls of Purdue University suggests instead is that competition is “a *system* in which there are aggressive, independent multiple choices available to both buyers and sellers as they try to make the decision whether to accept or reject offers . . . these people have to be able to communicate with each other.”

Communication is the key.

When the Union Stockyards of Chicago opened on Christmas Day, 1865, the terminal market meant communication. It meant a unique, complex, and highly sophisticated linkage of a national railroad network with the national meat supply.

Without the advantages of electronic communication, location was all-important. Chicago rested its claim as the world meat capital, the *Chicago Sun-Times* once said, on the strategic geographic position of those first 320 acres of swampland—midway between two-thirds of the Nation’s meat production to the West, and two-thirds of its meat consumption to the East.

How well Chicago met the communication challenge is revealed by the figures from its “golden era.”

By the end of the first year, in 1866, almost 20,000 animals had passed through the yards. This volume soared steadily until the mid-1920’s and influenced other cities to establish similar markets.

In 1924 the Chicago yards reached their zenith. A whopping 18,653,539 animals were handled that year—a figure that was never topped—either by Chicago or by any other market in the Nation.

Sophisticated rail developments paralleled the growth of the yards as they neared their 1924 peak. The re-



*Looking west in stockyards (above), about 1910. Livestock buyer and commission man (far right) look over cattle in sorting pen. Photo courtesy Chicago Historical Society.*



refrigerator car enabled packing companies, such as Armour, Swift, and Wilson, to gradually shift their slaughter operations from the consuming centers of the Eastern seaboard to the more concentrated livestock areas and terminal markets of the Midwest. Shipments of refrigerated beef soon replaced much of the movement of live animals to the East.

The livestock market news service, then a part of USDA's Bureau of Markets, matched these strides with innovations geared to industry's pace.

In June 1918, the first telegraphic reports on livestock receipts and prices were distributed daily from the Chicago Union Stockyards. Early attempts at animal classification—grade standards—to be used as the basis for price quotations on cattle, hogs, and sheep were also underway during the World War I years.

By 1924, the Chicago livestock market was a well-established nucleus of one of the greatest manufacturing centers of the world. All of the factors influencing the growth of terminal markets were functioning at their peak.

Successful livestock marketing meant that, for the best prices, the buyer and seller had to be represented at the terminal market. The cornerstones of "Packingtown"—the Armours, Swifts, and Wilsons—were laid, and the packing industry was thriving. The challenges had been met, the fortunes made.

Yet the world was throbbing with experiment and discovery.

Innovation in many fields, notably transportation and communication, began to give shape and meaning to an entirely new term in livestock marketing—decentralization.

Now new modes of sophisticated transportation began to stretch beyond the confines of the railroad. The late 1920's and 1930's witnessed an increasing reliance on the motor truck and hard-surfaced roads to haul goods to market. Streamlined road transportation, as well as artificial refrigeration

and freight rates that made shipment from interior slaughtering points economically advantageous, accelerated the trend toward a decentralized livestock marketing system.

Other factors hastened this development, and there are members of Chicago's Livestock Exchange who can recall this tangible change.

Sixty-eight-year-old Lester A. Hatch, a commission man (the producer's agent in an actual transaction) remembers the time before the 1920's when men would begin working in the yards at 4 a.m. and stop at 10 p.m., although they "never did finish."

Mr. Hatch attributes part of the drift away from terminal markets to the radio.

"When radio began to get big and they started to broadcast the market," he said, "farmers knew what their cattle and hogs were worth, and could sell them at home."

Radio and other communication methods made physical presence at a terminal market no longer necessary for a person to know the day's market prices. With the knowledge of the going price at Chicago making it feasible, and access to speedy truck transportation making it practical, direct marketing and auction markets grew popular . . . and Chicago was on the wane.

For decades the great packing companies had maintained their Chicago plants while opening additional facilities farther westward. But by 1960, even they had closed their Chicago doors to concentrate on expansion nearer livestock sources.

The implications here for the future are obvious and critical. Several years ago Chicago shifted from the principal center of competitive central marketing and meat packing to, primarily, a shipping point to the East. Nevertheless, it remained for all these years a national barometer of prices.

"Competition" and "barometer"—those terms again. How do they fit into the livestock picture now?

One theory, remember, defined competition as a system of "aggressive, independent multiple choices" based on communication. The concentrated competition of the central terminal market, it contends, is no longer necessary.

Now a "new competition" exists. Livestock producers can choose between direct selling, auctions and terminal markets—each comprehensively covered by USDA's market news service. This is today's answer to the inter-rivalry of multiple buyers and sellers once provided chiefly—if not exclusively—by the terminals.

Modern transportation and communication marks the difference between today's market and that of early Chicago. The conditions that brought the product to the people at the terminal market no longer exist. Now people may easily reach the product and physical presence is no longer a prerequisite to knowing the going price.

The question now is, what will be the base point for pricing?

There are those who say that Chicago had long outlived its initial usefulness as a price base, and had become little more than habit. This is of little consequence now. For the fact remains that until this month many country buyers have looked to Chicago's terminal quotation before offering to buy. And the question remains—with the close of Chicago, what market, or markets, if any, will become the national barometer of livestock marketing? □

*The author is Chief, Market News Branch, Livestock Division, C&MS, USDA.*



# REPLACING A GIANT

By Paul M. Fuller

"WE CAN'T HELP but think that Peoria will take the place of Chicago," says Lester A. Hatch, Sr., of the H. D. Copeland and Company commission firm.

The Copeland firm, originally of Chicago, has already relocated in Peoria, and Mr. Hatch, who has worked with livestock commission firms for 53 years, feels that "Peoria will be the basic market for cattle in the midwest."

Mr. Hatch's opinion is one among many that alternately suggest terminal markets like Peoria and Omaha, or direct marketing areas like the Texas panhandle as *the* "market" of the future.

The search for a substitute market to replace the traditional Chicago terminal is a natural one. But it is possible, perhaps necessary, to read into the closing of Chicago more than the need to find one or two substitute markets. For the end of the Chicago hog market was not an isolated event of May 1970, nor was the close of the cattle market one day in February 1971. Both highlight marketing trends that were long in coming, and tell quite a story by the very fact of their passing.

USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service's market news program has adapted its services to a constantly changing industry for the past half century.

It projects a future that hinges less and less on specific markets, for the trend toward decentralization in livestock marketing has gained too much impetus to slow down now.

Producers and packers already are relying more heavily on reports from two sources: prices reported on the national meat trade and results of sales from the predominant marketing method in their own area. And direct sales from feeder to packer are rapidly becoming the "predominant marketing method" in more and more areas.

Those in the Texas panhandle, for example, have to look no further than their surrounding direct marketing areas for a source of price quotations. The same applies to other direct trading areas across the country, such as eastern Nebraska or Iowa. At the same

time, the industry in the Chicago area may find the Peoria terminal the most useful source of price information.

This situation typifies the ever-changing nature of the livestock industry, a characteristic which has the potential to create serious price-information gaps. Filling these gaps is the function and responsibility of the market news service. And the program has updated itself frequently to parallel industry developments over the past 20 years.

In 1950, packers purchased 75 percent of their cattle at terminals. That figure now stands at 25 percent. By 1955 the market news service had begun to shift its reporting services to the young and fast-growing marketing forms. Expansion of the offices reporting direct and auction sales was underway.

Today, in addition to terminal markets, the 55 Federal-State offices cover trading at auction markets, in production areas, and at wholesale meat centers as well. In fact, the market news program now reports direct transactions in every State west of the Mississippi River except Arkansas, Louisiana, and South Dakota.

But the price information gap is only a part of the challenge that decentralization has brought to market news.

By its very nature, decentralized marketing involves more personal seller-to-buyer marketing relationships. Reporting from direct areas and auction markets has meant far more than setting up new offices, establishing new facilities, training and organizing new staffs.

It has meant a fresh approach to reporting livestock market news, an awareness that a shift in the very concept of livestock marketing underlies physical change. The market news service filled this need by sending livestock and meat market reporters to auctions, feedlots, ranches, and packing plants to obtain extensive information on volume, grade, and price of livestock traded.

As the trend toward direct marketing gained momentum, it became increasingly difficult to set a meaningful market price on the declining num-

bers of livestock passing through the terminals. With more and more producers selling cattle direct to packers, two problems came about.

First, sales were now taking place at thousands of farms across the country, and no market news reporter could hope to see all livestock sold. By necessity, then, the reporting of direct sales could only be on a sample basis, and greater reliance had to be placed on communication by telephone.

Second (and perhaps more important), sales direct from farms are often made on a "grade and weight" basis. That is, the price the farmer receives for his livestock is based on the grade and weight of the carcass. This means that often there is no price for the live animals.

How then do you report a price for cattle that is meaningful to producers? Meat price reporting—in addition to direct market reporting—seemed the answer.

In 1958, largely at the request of livestock feeders and producers wanting to know market trends for dressed meat, the market news service began reporting carlot sales of meat in the Denver and Omaha areas.

Prior to that time, USDA meat reporting was primarily concerned with the distributive trade in large consuming centers—New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

The meat trade of 1970 is more important to more producers and packers than it has been at any previous time in livestock history. And market news reports covering sales of dressed meat have become a popular and effective marketing tool for the industry. Market news bases most of its reports on the five large meat marketing areas in the country—the Midwest, the Texas panhandle, Colorado, and the East and West coasts.

Reports on the meat trade and on direct livestock sales, then, will figure importantly in the foreseeable future. But the close of Chicago with all of its implications for alternative marketing systems, also bears on the future of the terminal market.

It was back in 1955 that Omaha took the crown from Chicago as king



of hog slaughtering and processing. Now Omaha is the largest terminal in the country, first in overall volume of livestock receipts. For this reason the market news service uses Omaha to compute a daily average price and average weight for hogs that is representative nationally. This weighted average price is based on the actual total volume of hogs at Omaha each day.

While some analysts predict that Omaha will become the midwestern price base (USDA's Economic Research Service is currently using the market as a source of price quotations on hogs), there are several commission men in Chicago who favor Peoria.

Like Lester Hatch, Jr., of the Cope-

land commission firm, who bases his optimism for the Peoria market on the increase (about 200 percent) in hog sales there since the Chicago hog market closed.

"We were the number one firm in hogs in Chicago," says Mr. Hatch, "handling from 15 to 20 percent of all the hogs in Chicago. Now we're fourth in Peoria, but actually we're doing a bigger business than in Chicago.

"For example," he continues, "two weeks ago in Peoria we averaged 5,500 hogs for the week. Here in Chicago our average was 3,000 a week."

The Hatches are among a group of Chicago commission men who have formed the International Livestock Exchange. This corporation, headed

by John K. Dolan of the Dolan-Ludeman firm, is designed to offer producers the same services they get at terminal markets—competition, guaranteed payment, professional commission men—before the cattle leave the feedlot. They hope to enter the void left by the closing of Chicago.

The options are all open and they're numerous. The signals given, and they're dissonant. The paths cleared, and they fork in many ways. Yet beyond the uncertainty of the present, the livestock industry faces a most definite and invigorating future of change and prosperity. □

*The author is Assistant Chief, Market News Branch, Livestock Division, C&MS, USDA.*



*This view is typical of a large livestock terminal market.*



# please don't eat the plastic produce

CAN YOU IMAGINE a potato which never goes bad? Well, this one doesn't. It's made of plastic, one of many models used by fresh fruit and vegetable inspectors.

Because Mother Nature makes potatoes in all shapes and sizes, deciding if a potato is U.S. No. 1 according to official grade standards is no easy task. Models, as well as other visual aids, supplement written instructions and help inspectors, whether in Idaho, California, New Jersey, or any other

State, to interpret standards uniformly.

Grade standards, developed by USDA as a basis for measuring quality, give the produce industry a common trading language for buying and selling. It is the job of Federal and Federal-State inspectors to apply these standards and certify that a product does or does not meet a particular grade.

Inspection is a voluntary service paid for by the user. The Federal-State Inspection Service is admin-

istered by USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service in cooperation with State agencies.

Since pictures often tell a story better than words, color photographs and color slides, as well as models, are prepared by C&MS' Fruit and Vegetable Division to show shape, color, and different types and degrees of defects.

These visual aids show the inspector what is acceptable for a specific factor in a particular grade. Other



*Which potatoes are real? Hint: Two are fakes—plastic and plaster of Paris models used by fresh fruit and vegetable inspectors. For the answer, see p. 18.*



*Working in the C&MS Visual Aids Lab, an artist paints a plaster of Paris model using a real apple as her guide.*



visual aids include color comparators which give color limits, and equipment to measure size.

An inspector refers to visual aids primarily to check his judgment against the minimum requirements of a grade. Because his decision means a lot to producers, shippers, and buyers who buy and sell fresh fruits and vegetables by grade, it must be accurate.

Visual aids can help solve unique problems, too. Recently, for instance, new types of discoloration affecting

lettuce have been found. Color photographs were made to identify the discoloration and help guide the inspectors in grading lettuce with these defects.

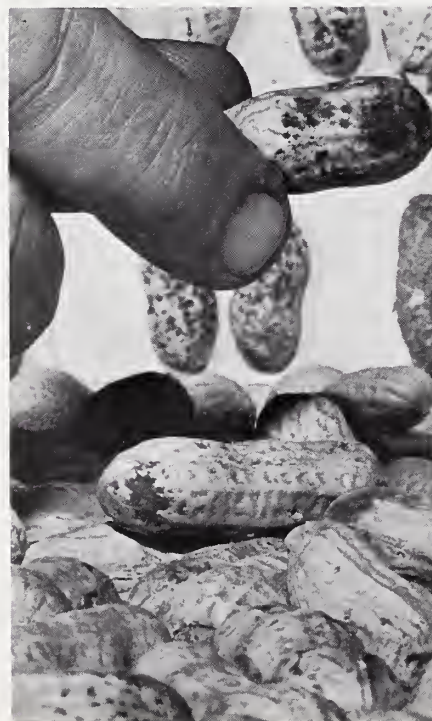
The usefulness of visual aids is constantly being expanded by innovations. For example, readily accessible loose-leaf notebooks containing transparent plastic pages of slides and pictures have taken the place of the previous stacks of bulky file folders. Inspectors can remove appropriate pages to use

“on the job” without fear of damage.

Fragile plaster of Paris models are difficult for the inspector to carry with him, but they have the advantage of being three-dimensional. Newer plastic models, which are washable and unbreakable, are now being studied and developed.

A newly developed cherry model has an added dimension. It can be squeezed to test for firmness . . . and it even has a pit in the center!

What will they think of next? □

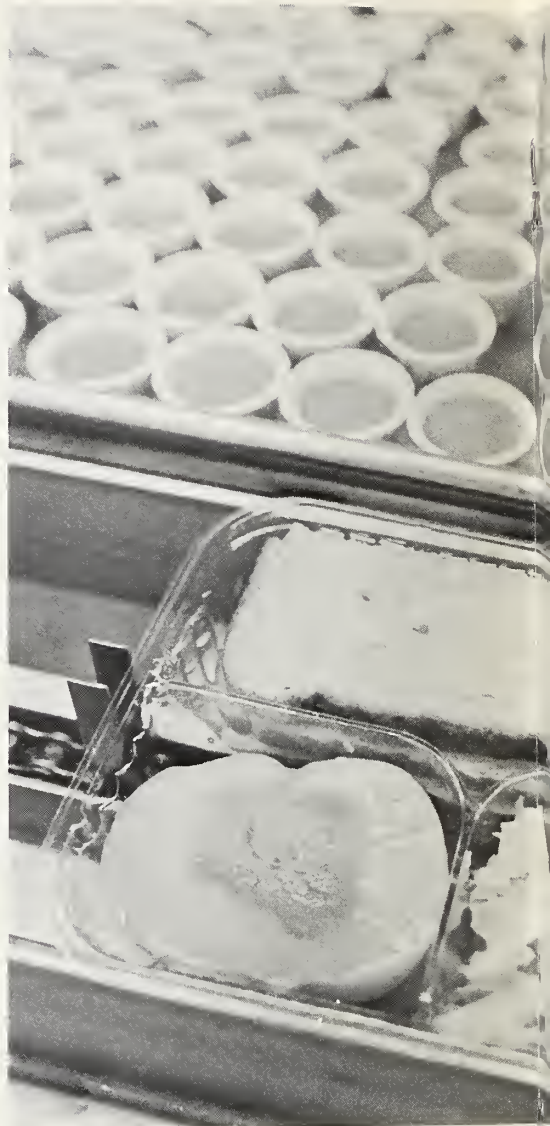


*Color comparators help inspectors determine if carrots (upper left) and apples (upper right) meet the color requirements of a particular grade. An inspector checks discoloration of peanuts (right) against models showing what is allowed in various grades.*

## kitchens reach out to feed kids



*School lunch workers  
use the latest  
in sanitary methods  
and new packaging  
techniques as they  
fill nutritious  
trays to go out  
to schools in  
time for the  
daily lunch bell.  
Each tray is  
neatly packed  
chock full  
of a balanced meal.*



GETTING THE FOOD to fill the endless cavity that youngsters characteristically develop at mealtime becomes quite a challenge when their schools don't have kitchen facilities.

Current methods of reaching out with food service to youngsters in schools without kitchens include the use of satellite kitchens, central kitchens, and contracts with food management companies. All of these

methods are used to bring USDA-approved lunches to schools.

In Baltimore, the "satellite" concept operates with three service centers which pack lunches and "satellite" them to 69 elementary schools in the area. The majority of the lunches are what is called Vit-A-Lunch, a cold pack, with the components assembled on a fiber tray and filmsealed in a pleasing meal package.

A sample Vit-A-Lunch might include a spiced ham sandwich, cabbage salad, applesauce, a cracker packet with a pat of protein-bonus spread (butter, peanut butter and honey), and milk.

The lunches are packed on a conveyor belt, which flows at the rate of 23 lunches per minute. Each worker contributes to the meal tray . . . a disposable plastic ware package and





one slice of bread, two slices spiced ham, a cup of cabbage salad, etc. The lunches are kept fresh overnight in a cold room. Menus are planned on a 5-week cycle.

Even better, hot lunches are "satellited" to two schools from a new kitchen, sparkling with efficient equipment, which was 75 percent paid for by funds from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service. The hot lunches

are packed in insulated trays and delivered the same day they are to be served.

The central kitchen in Indianapolis has a colorful history. In its past it was a soft drink bottling plant that proved remarkably adjustable to school lunch needs.

This is the second year this central kitchen is providing food for youngsters in schools with no lunchroom. The fully equipped kitchen has the capacity to deliver 50,000 meals a day. Forty-one schools are being served this year, a sizable increase over last year's 27 schools.

The trained staff uses highly automated equipment to prepare food for the lunches, including making all the baked goods.

Putting together individual lunches is an assembly-line operation—workers wearing plastic gloves place controlled portions of food on each disposable compartment tray moving along a conveyor belt. Lunches are stacked in wire baskets and kept cold in huge walk-in refrigerators, ready for the trip to surrounding schools. Specially designed ovens located in the receiving schools heat the hot portion of the lunches for serving with milk and other cold foods.

The central kitchen in Laredo, Texas, services eight schools, via stainless steel food carriers, which are transported to the schools by five trucks. One unusual feature of the kitchen is an exceptionally large dishwasher which is able to handle the large metal luncheon trays, eliminating a labor problem that existed when the trays had to be washed by hand.

The workday begins early at the Laredo central kitchen. The baking staff arrives at 4 a.m. and the meat and vegetable cooks start their day at 5 a.m. The lunches are ready for their trip to the schools by 10:30 in the morning.

Philadelphia is another city that uses satellite feeding, with a central commissary and kitchen.

Trucks and buses deliver the meals to receiving schools for heating and serving. Equipment necessary at the satellite schools is simple, relatively inexpensive and takes up little space. The meals are prepared the day before serving in the spotless central commissary and trucked to the schools that afternoon or on the morning they are to be served.

The meals consist of a hot portion (entree and vegetables), packaged in a two-compartment aluminum foil container and a cold portion (fruit, roll, butter, and dessert), put up in a clear plastic package. A 1/2-pint carton of milk, straw, and plastic utensils and a napkin complete the serving. The disposable containers and utensils eliminate dishwashing.

At this stage in the development of the Philadelphia program, 60 public elementary schools are being served approximately 16,500 good nutritious meals a day from central preparation and packaging facilities.

Detroit, Michigan, is contracting with a private food firm to prepare lunches for service by school personnel in 46 schools in inner-city poverty areas. These will be cold lunches served in styrofoam containers.

The idea was successfully tested as a pilot project last school year (1969-70) in 16 schools from April till the end of school. This pilot project was to determine the acceptability and popularity among the students, teachers, and parents.

This is a roundup of some of the things that are being done. Many other school systems are using these methods, and variations of them, along with other innovations to get food to youngsters in schools that do not have adequate preparation facilities. □



#### GOLD BEANS FOR breakfast?

Many children from the migrant labor camp at Hereford, Texas, had a breakfast of beans or nothing at all—until the school began serving breakfasts under USDA's School Breakfast Program.

The addition of a breakfast program in all the elementary schools in the system 2 years ago represents another step in this school district's desire to feed its hungry children.

A firm believer in school feeding, Superintendent of Schools Roy L. Hartman considers the school lunch and breakfast programs a vital part of the help schools can give to children.

Hereford, a Texas Panhandle town near the New Mexico border, is a part of the "Salad Bowl," a large segment of the west Texas area which produces commercial vegetables. The migrant labor force, largely Mexican-American, is a vital part of this industry.

Migrant labor is only seasonal however, often causing the children to be erratic in their school attendance. In 1968, for example, one elementary school had more than an 89-percent turnover during the school year.

The breakfast program, part of the overall plan to better educate the children, encourages them to come to school.

Many of the migrant children eat meals free during the times of year when there is little work available and then pay for breakfast and lunch when the family can get work.

One result of the breakfast program has been improved attendance. The number of migrant children who complete their education has risen noticeably.

A decade ago, only two or three Mexican-Americans were in the high school graduating class, even though they comprised about one-fifth of the total enrollment. This past year there were 73 Mexican-Americans among the 285 graduating seniors.

All the school cafeterias in Hereford serve only the USDA-recommended breakfasts and balanced lunches.

"Our students can actually get two-thirds of their daily nutritional requirements at the school cafeteria," Mr. Hartman points out. "This will go a long way toward assuring better health as well as better students."

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are handled in Texas by the Education Agency and administered nationally by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service.

Although the Hereford school system is much concerned with feeding low-income students, the programs are important to all children. □



## foods are earmarked for Emergencies

A WEEK OF HEAVY rains last fall in Puerto Rico caused 50 deaths and \$50 million in property damage.

During that disaster, over 1,900 of its victims received more than 77,000 pounds of donated foods from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, working with the Puerto Rico Department of

Social Services.

These large quantities of donated foods were used in the shelter at Rodriguez General Hospital in San Juan, and in areas of flooding throughout the country where families were temporarily displaced.

This relief feeding in Puerto Rico was another instance of the use of USDA-donated foods to help victims of disasters. During any natural or man-made disaster, supplies of these foods (normally used in family feeding programs and in schools taking part in child nutrition programs) may immediately be distributed for relief use.

Foods most often used are canned meats, vegetables, fruits, and juices; cheese; instant dried non-fat milk; potato flakes; dry scrambled egg mix; and grain products. Infants receive evaporated milk, corn syrup and farina.

When disaster threatens, State distributing agencies regularly alert school officials and welfare agencies so that the donated foods will be readily available for disaster feeding.

USDA foods have a long history of relief to victims of a wide variety of disasters:

- When tornadoes and floods in the spring of 1965 made thousands of people homeless in the Midwest, more than 2.5 million pounds of donated foods were made available to 125,000 disaster victims in Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Indiana.

- Seventeen million pounds of USDA foods were supplied to victims of Hurricanes Hilda in 1964, Betsy in 1965, and Beulah in 1967.

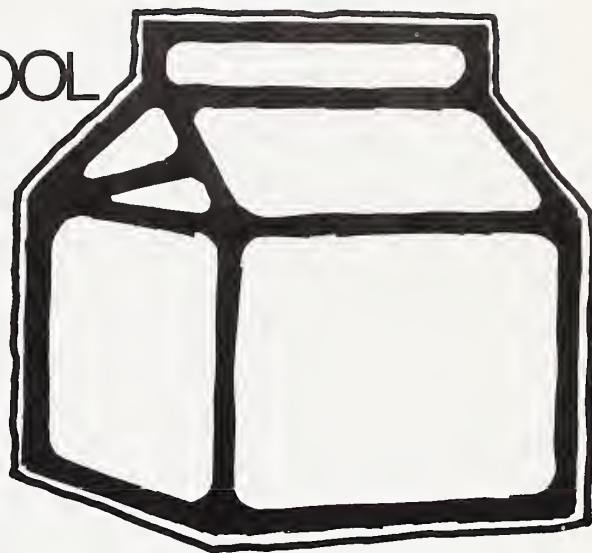
- For Hurricane Celia victims (in August 1970), 2 million pounds of USDA food were distributed from a Corpus Christi warehouse. The Salvation Army fed 11,000 people in its canteens, and the American Red Cross fed 20,000 victims daily through Army field kitchens. Three and one-half million pounds were diverted from other areas to replenish Corpus Christi supplies to meet post-storm needs.

- Donated foods were also used in these other disasters: the typhoon of 1966 in American Samoa, the riots of July 1967 in New Jersey and Detroit, and the snowstorms of December 1967, in New Mexico and Arizona. □





## AFTER-SCHOOL SNACKS CLOSE NUTRITION GAP !



IT'S OFTEN A matter of hours between the end of a child's schoolday and the end of his parents' workday. Many of these youngsters need supervision along with a nutritious snack to tide them over until their parents get home.

Thus, community agencies and organizations find that after-school programs for children are much in demand.

To help fill the nutrition gap for children between lunch at school and dinner at home, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service offers food and cash to help these out-of-school programs serve between-meal snacks, including at least milk or juice, and bread, rolls or cereal.

In New Jersey, for example, the Jersey City Housing Authority's after-school program has served 200,000 nutritious snacks since the program was authorized last November by the New Jersey Department of Education. Conrad J. Vuocolo, Director of Tenant Services, says, "In addition to filling the nutritional needs of our children with milk and other supplemental food, the program enjoys a tremendous community involvement."

More than 25 volunteer mothers, senior citizens and teenagers bake almost daily to help provide the food that is served each afternoon in all the City's eight low-income housing developments.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Neighborhood Youth Corps and other local organizations also help out. The program has grown from serving 1,500 children a day in the fall of last school year to 3,000 by the end of the year. Not surprisingly, milk and peanut butter sandwiches are big menu items, with frequent bonuses of applesauce or other fruit.

A somewhat different but equally successful application of the after-school nutrition idea is in use at the Georgetown Children's House, a 40-year-old day care center in Northwest Washington, D.C. According to the director, Mrs. Joan W. McDaniel, it provides care for 80 children in the metropolitan area, primarily with funds distributed by the local Health and Welfare Council of the United Givers Fund.

The children, whose mothers work and cannot pay for private care, are from 3 to 10 years old. The program

(available 50 weeks per year) is open from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., 5 days a week.

Many of the children are students at nearby Anthony Hyde Elementary School. When school is out, they come to the center to enjoy many types of activities, including instruction in art, dance, and music.

Volunteers help in these programs as well as assist in serving sandwiches, cereal, and milk. Sometimes a local bakery donates cupcakes. And on birthdays there's ice cream and cake.

In this center USDA's food and cash donations help provide not only after-school snacks, but all-day food service for the children.

It's all part of USDA's Special Food Service Program, a comprehensive effort to improve the nutritional health of both school-aged and preschool children.

Begun in 1968, this flexible program supplements the 24-year-old National School Lunch Program by aiding child food service in summer recreation programs, preschool centers, after-school programs—in fact, virtually any organized activity for children. □

# DIAL-THE-NEWS-- your directory for up-to-the-minute market news



DIAL-THE-NEWS, which provides instant market news on farm products, has joined the ranks of dial-the-weather and dial-the-time as a successful public service.

The service was instituted in Denver in 1964 to provide buyers and sellers with up-to-the-minute market information on livestock and meat.

Since then the Federal-State Market News Service, operated cooperatively by State departments of agriculture and USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service, has enlarged the service considerably. "Instant" reports are now available not only on livestock and meat but also on fruits and vegetables, grain, cotton, poultry, and dairy products.

The steady increase in automatic answering devices has brought the total now in operation to 55, in 18 States. Four more are planned for poultry market news (one for Chicago, Ill.; one for Newark, N.J.; one for Portland, Ore., and one for Des Moines, Iowa). Another four will go into operation within the next few months for livestock market news (one for Wichita, Kan., two for Omaha, Neb., and one for Thomasville, Ga.).

The following directory gives an up-to-date listing of where to call. Information is available 24 hours a day (some on a seasonal basis), with most reports changing at least daily.

## Directory

(Numbers in parenthesis refer to telephone area.)

### ALABAMA

*Birmingham* (800) 292-8508

Reports on potatoes from May through June.

### ARIZONA

*Nogales* (602) 287-5022

Reports on fruits and vegetables from December through June.

*Phoenix* (602) 279-4134

279-4135

279-4136

Lettuce and other vegetables reported year-round.

*Yuma* (602) 782-9597

Lettuce and melon reports from November through July.

### CALIFORNIA

*Bakersfield* (805) 323-0727

Potato reports from May through July.

*Blythe* (714) 922-7152

Lettuce reports.

*Coachella* (714) 398-0069

Reports on grapes from May through July.

*El Centro* (714) 352-5130

352-5131

Reports on lettuce, melons, and other vegetables from December through July.

*Fresno* (209) 488-5486

Grapes and other fruits reported year-round.

*Fresno* (209) 264-2861

Melon reports from July through October.

*Fresno* (209) 486-0511

Market news on cotton from October through December.

*Los Angeles* (213) 622-7822

Year-round reports on hay and grain. Updated twice daily—hay at 11:30 a.m.; grain at 2:30 p.m.

*Los Angeles* (213) 622-0784

Reports on poultry and eggs.

*Salinas* (408) 424-1425

424-1426

Lettuce and other vegetables reported year-round.

*Santa Maria* (805) 925-0091

Lettuce and other vegetables reported year-round.

*Stockton* (209) 466-3085

Information on 12 major Midwest livestock markets, wholesale meat, California feedlot-range sales, and auction markets. Updated twice daily.

### COLORADO

*Alamosa* (303) 589-6644

Lettuce reports July through August.

*Brush* (303) 842-2249

Colorado feedlot cattle sales, feeder auc-

tion sales, meat trade information, Midwest hog market information. Year-round. Updated three times a day.

*Ft. Morgan* (303) 842-2249

Same as Brush, Colorado.

*Greeley* (303) 353-5170

Colorado feedlot cattle sales, feeder auction sales, meat trade information. Year-round. Lamb trading reports from December through March. Updated three times a day.

*Monte Vista* (303) 852-2568

Potato reports September through May.

*Palisade* (303) 464-7771

Peach reports, August through September.

*Sterling* (303) 522-4772

Colorado feedlot sales, cattle sales, feeder auction sales, meat trade information, Midwest hog market information. Year-round. Updated three times daily.

### DELAWARE

*Dover* (302) 698-2345

Reports on potatoes from July through October.

### FLORIDA

*Belle Glade* (305) 996-5566

Vegetable reports.

*Pompano Beach* (305) 946-4343

Vegetable reports from October through May.

### GEORGIA

*Atlanta* (404) 526-3073

Reports year-round prices on ready-to-cook broilers. Updated four times daily.

*Atlanta* (404) 526-3075

Reports year-round prices on eggs. Updated twice daily.

### IDAHO

*Idaho Falls* (208) 522-3979

Reports on potatoes and onions September through June.

### ILLINOIS

*Chicago* (312) 353-7711

353-7719

Reports year-round on potatoes, onions and other vegetables.

*Chicago* (312) 922-2030

Reports year-round prices on eggs. Up-



dated twice daily.

*Springfield* (217) 525-2055

Grain market news reports—corn, wheat, soybeans, and oats for Springfield and Chicago—year-round. Updated daily at 4:45 p.m.

*Springfield* (217) 525-4019

Reports Chicago meat trade and livestock prices for Illinois area. Updated twice daily.  
**IOWA**

*Ames* (515) 294-6899

Reports slaughter livestock and meat prices. Updated twice daily.

*Ames* (515) 294-4347

Reports feeder cattle information. Updated twice daily.

#### **KANSAS**

*Dodge City* (316) 225-1311

Reports direct trading of livestock in Western Kansas, Colorado, and Oklahoma, and wholesale meat trade. Year-round reports, updated twice daily.

#### **MICHIGAN**

*Detroit* (313) 399-5515

Year-round reports on egg markets. Updated twice daily.

#### **MISSOURI**

*St. Louis* (314) 622-4517

Year-round reports on poultry and eggs. Updated daily at 11:30 a.m.

#### **NEW JERSEY**

*Bridgeton* (609) 455-2510  
455-2511

Fruit and vegetable reports available year-round.

*Hightown* (609) 448-1482

Fruit and vegetable reports year-round.

*Newark* (201) 645-3369

Year-round reports on prices and market conditions on eggs and butter. Updated twice daily.

#### **NEW MEXICO**

*Clovis* (505) 763-3030

Livestock market news reports updated five times a day. Reports on carlot meat trade, cattle futures, Midwest livestock markets—plus local feedlot and range sales each Friday.

*Las Cruces* (505) 646-4928  
646-4929

Reports on lettuce and onions available in October and from May through June.

#### **TEXAS**

*Austin* (512) 475-3845

Reports year-round prices and market conditions on poultry and eggs. Updated twice a day.

*Hereford* (806) 364-0219

Vegetable reports from July through November.

*Weslaco* (512) 682-3351

Vegetable and citrus reports October through June.

#### **VIRGINIA**

*Onley* (703) 787-3500

Potato reports from May through August.

#### **WYOMING**

*Torrington* (307) 532-2366

Reports on marketing of slaughter and feeder cattle and lambs in Wyoming and Western Nebraska, plus carlot meat information from Denver, Chicago, and New York. Updated daily. □

## States Intent on Beating Wholesome Poultry TIMECLOCK

WITH 6 MONTHS LEFT for State poultry inspection programs to be certified equal to the Federal one, five States have already had their programs certified. And another 32 States and Puerto Rico are working to beat the timeclock.

The overall goal is to establish, by August 18, a nationwide inspection network so that all poultry in this country will be inspected under a uniform standard for wholesomeness—whether it's inspected by USDA or the States.

California, Missouri, New Mexico, South Carolina and Washington have led the way. They now inspect all their intrastate poultry plants under State programs certified as being at least equal to the one conducted by USDA for plants operating in interstate and foreign commerce.

To be certified, each of these States had to develop adequate laws, regulations, financing, and staffing. They also had to place all plants subject to inspection under actual inspection at least matching the program conducted by USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service.

As of mid-January, 32 States had not yet completed all these requirements. They are Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

C&MS will have to assume responsibility for inspecting intrastate poultry plants in any of these States that do not fulfill the requirements before the August 18 deadline. This task was set for USDA by the Wholesome Poultry Products Act, which was enacted August 18, 1968.

The law gave each State 2 years to develop equal-to inspection, with pro-

vision for a 1-year extension if adequate progress were being made toward the goal.

At the end of that 2 years—in August 1970—USDA judged the California, New Mexico, and South Carolina programs to be equal to Federal poultry inspection. Thirty-four States were found to be making sufficient progress to be given the third year to complete their programs. Puerto Rico was also granted this extension.

But the other 13 States requested Federal inspection, indicating they didn't feel there was enough poultry business in their States to warrant establishing their own inspection systems. USDA, under the law, was required to assume responsibility for inspecting the plants they did have.

USDA began by surveying nonFederally inspected poultry plants in the 13 States: Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah and West Virginia. Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota had no intrastate plants in operation at the time of the survey.

The surveyors determined inspection staffing needs and what corrective measures, if any, the plants would have to take to meet Federal requirements.

After completing the surveys, C&MS hired and trained additional personnel to handle the extra inspection workload in the intrastate plants. These plants are now under Federal inspection. Approximately 270 intrastate plants in the five "equal-to" States are under State inspection. For the remaining States, there's still time to meet the August 18 deadline for certification.

As C&MS keeps check on their intrastate poultry plants to see that none endangers the public health in the interim, the 32 States and Puerto Rico keep their sights fixed on that wholesome poultry timeclock. □

# CLEARING ADDITIVES FOR MEAT AND POULTRY PRODUCTS

NOT FROM MEAT AND vegetables alone is a good beef stew made, even though many of the ingredients never reach the eye of the consumer.

The same is true of most other processed meat and poultry products which contain flavorings or other chemical additives. Approving these additives is an important job of the Federal meat and poultry inspection team.

With very few exceptions, every ingredient in a product must be listed in the ingredient statement on the label for the consumer to see. The additives to be used in a given product must also be listed by the manufacturer when he submits a formula and label of the product for advance approval by officials in United States Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

An ingredient is generally regarded as something which improves nutritional qualities of the product. An additive is aimed at a physical quality of a product, such as its color or flavor.

An additive must be specifically approved, and its safety verified, before it can be used in a federally inspected meat or poultry product.

Specifically, eight criteria guide C&MS specialists in deciding whether to approve an additive to be used in a food product.

- The additive must be safe. C&MS will determine this in cooperation with the Food and Drug Administration of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. A manufacturer must file a food additive petition with FDA, which will determine the safety and allowable amounts for the additive.

- A need for the additive must be demonstrated. The manufacturer must point to a problem which justifies the use of a corrective additive.

- The additive must be effective for its intended job.

- The additive must be used only at the level necessary to accomplish this intended purpose. C&MS applies these latter two criteria based on guidelines set for specific additives by FDA.

- The manufacturer must submit detailed plans for controlling the amount of the additive which goes into the product.

- If the additive has restrictions on its use, the manufacturer must inform C&MS of the laboratory techniques which will be used to determine the level of the additive in the final product before it is released for distribution.

- The additive must not promote deception. On this point the C&MS specialists determine if use of the additive in the product would either conceal damage or inferiority, increase its bulk or weight, or reduce its quality or strength.

In addition, C&MS makes sure the additive does not make the product appear to be of higher quality than it actually is. An artificial coloring, for example, could mask certain undesirable qualities of a product.

- If a potentially deceptive additive is proposed for use, C&MS must check whether informative labeling will eliminate the possibility of deceiving the purchaser. C&MS would determine, for example, whether the words "artificial coloring added" in bold print on the label would properly alert the purchaser to an additive and prevent his being deceived.

Additives in the products themselves are only one factor in the total environment of a food processing plant. There are certain non-food elements in the meat and poultry plants which are checked by C&MS.

As an extra measure of safety, a staff of C&MS chemists scrutinizes all non-food compounds, such as cleansers, which will be used in a plant processing area.

Another group of C&MS experts reviews all plans for new equipment to be used in the plants, to make sure the machines are capable of turning out wholesome products and can be easily kept in a sanitary condition.

The end result of this scrutiny over meat and poultry plants by the inspection team is an atmosphere conducive to the output of wholesome products. By requiring submission of all data on food additives and approval by this team before a product may be manufactured under Federal inspection, C&MS can keep close control on the flow of new and modified meat and poultry products to the marketplace. The consumer is the beneficiary of the team's efforts. □





# presenting the PRUNE in his own behalf

By Martha B. Parris

YOU PEOPLE DO NOT understand me. You say that no matter how young I may be, I am always full of wrinkles. You're right, of course, but why don't you look beyond the wrinkles?

I'm full of vitamins and minerals. I'm tasty and versatile as well as a thrifty buy all year long. I can be a delicious breakfast, dessert, or salad fruit, a pastry filling or an energy-packed snack during the day.

My name is the Prune d'Agen, but you may know me as the French prune. I am the most popular dried prune. You may also know some of my cousins—the Italian, Robe, and Imperial prunes. We are all special kinds of plums.

USDA has quality standards for all of us, and the Fruit and Vegetable Division of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service provides an inspection service for us.

For a fee, C&MS inspectors will check samples from dried prune shipments to determine if we meet the grade requirements. And we try very hard to make the grade.

To show you that I really want you to have the best, I'll tell you what it takes to be a U.S. Grade A or Fancy dried prune. That way you'll know what to look for if you can't find my real name or grade on my package.

First of all, to be Grade A, I must be nice and ripe with an even skin color—a blue- or brown-black. My texture must be fleshy, and my skin and flesh undamaged. Grade B dried prunes, on the other hand, may not be as tender and may have slightly scarred skins or a few other defects.

I am generally available in four sizes: extra large, large, medium, and small. My size is based on the number of us that can fit into a pound. There are 43 extra large prunes in a pound; about 85 small ones per pound. We



small size prunes are sometimes called "breakfast" prunes.

An increasing number of us now come pitted, ready for quick use.

As I said earlier, I am the most popular dried prune, and I owe it all to Pierre and Louis Pellier—and you, of course. These two men started my career as a commercial fruit in this country. They left France in the Gold Rush Days for California's Santa Clara Valley.

Although they were happy with their new home, Pierre became lonesome for his girlfriend, so Louis sent him back to France to marry her. I'll never forget the happy day in 1856 when Pierre returned to California with his bride. He brought Louis a present—some of my branches.

Now California is the world's largest producer of dried prunes and the Santa Clara Valley accounts for about 25 percent of this production.

We California prunes are popular both as prunes and as prune juice. About 30 percent of us are made into juice. We who are sold as prunes are popular all over the world.

About one-third of us are exported to Europe and other countries. Another third are sold to large buyers, such as restaurants and the armed forces. The rest of us are sold in retail stores in this country.

Although we are basically the same as we were a hundred years ago, our life is a little different now. Back then, we ripened on the trees until we dropped off by our own weight onto a cushion of earth which had been loosened to break our fall. We were picked up, washed, and put on beds to bask in the sun.

Nowadays, you people have a more efficient system. To protect us from possible damage when we fall, you place canvas under our trees. Many of

us are gently shaken from the tree by mechanical vibrators.

Almost none of us are sun-dried. The humidity, temperature, and other variables of the weather can jeopardize our quality, so you now have machines which dry us with artificially induced heat—it's very scientific.

After we are dried, we are stored for awhile. Next we are sized and washed. When we reached your store in special protective packages, we are clean, tender, and ready to eat.

Now that you've heard my story, maybe you'll appreciate me a little more. And, please don't confuse me with some of my relatives. Just remember my motto: All prunes are plums, but not all plums are prunes.

We are a little different, and I like to think that we are something special. "Hospital strawberries" my foot! □

*The author is an information specialist, Information Division, C&MS, USDA.*

## plentiful foods for February

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES dominate USDA's Plentiful Foods List for February.

Prunes and potatoes are the featured items. Other foods on the list for February include oranges and orange juice, grapefruit and grapefruit juice, apples, onions, pork, broiler-fryers, and peanuts and peanut products.

California dried prune production is estimated to be 200,000 tons, up 54 percent from last year. Stocks of peanuts in commercial storage this past fall were 22% above those of a year earlier. □

read that  
seed  
label !



ASSURING HEALTHY SEEDS has come a long way since the Middle Ages, when seeds were thrown through fires to control disease organisms.

Today seeds are treated with chemicals to prevent damage by insects, fungi, and bacteria. Most chemicals used for treating seed, such as phenol mercury acetate, are harmful to bacteria or fungi, and if misused are also potentially harmful to animals and humans.

To help prevent misuse of treated seeds and possible fatal results, the Federal Seed Act requires that seeds treated with mercurials and other similarly toxic substances be labeled accordingly.

The label must state the name of the substance the seed is treated with—either the commonly accepted coined name, the chemical name, or a standard abbreviation of the chemical name. For example, BHC is the standard abbreviation for benzene hexachloride, which is the chemical name.

(These names and abbreviations are found in many available publications, including one entitled, "Requirements Under the Federal Seed Act for Labeling Treated Seed," available from the Seed Branch, Grain Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, South Laboratory Bldg., Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, Md. 20705.)

A label for treated seed must also contain an appropriate caution statement. Mercurials and similarly toxic substances must be labeled with the word "POISON" in red letters and with the skull-and-crossbones symbol.

Other substances classified as "harmful" in the regulations under the Federal Seed Act are required to be labeled with a statement such as "Do

not use for food, feed or oil purposes."

Although lawn seeds are not ordinarily treated, home gardeners should note that many vegetable seeds, such as sweet corn, are often treated with toxic substances to help insure successful growth.

The Food and Drug Administration of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare requires that food or feed grain seeds (wheat, oats, barley, rye, corn and grain sorghum) be colored an unnatural color if treated with a toxic substance. Most of these treated seeds are colored red.

To prevent misuse of treated seeds, USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service, which administers the Federal Seed Act, has recommended that farmers and home gardeners:

- Carefully read and heed the label when buying seed.
- Buy only the amount of treated seed necessary, or treat with chemicals only the amount of seed you are going to use.
- Place treated seed in containers marked "POISON" and fully identify these as containing treated seeds.
- Don't reuse bags or containers which previously held treated seeds or were used in treating the seeds with chemicals.
- Don't store treated seeds with animal feed, or in places accessible to livestock or children.

• Destroy unused seeds immediately to prevent their use as livestock feed or human food. Burying small amounts of treated seed deep into the ground is a good way of disposing of them.

So, whether you're a farmer with 5 or 5,000 acres, or a home gardener with a vegetable garden, become a seed label reader and be careful when using treated seed. □

## Consumers—do you know?

YOU NEEDN'T WORRY if the meat around the bones of some chickens looks reddish brown—even after cooking. It's safe to eat, according to USDA poultry inspectors. Broiler-fryers tend to show this effect because they're marketed young, at 6 to 8 weeks. Their bone marrow has not fully hardened, and the red blood cells seep into the surrounding meat, causing a deep red or brown color. □

You should always cook meat and poultry at low to moderate temperatures. This provides maximum tenderness and juiciness and yields more meat to serve because of less shrinkage. It also helps make sure the center is fully cooked without the outside being overdone. Proper cooking helps assure wholesomeness, USDA inspectors advise. □

Fit for a king . . . that "Chicken (or Turkey) a la King" you buy at the grocer's must contain at least 20 percent cooked, deboned poultry meat, under standards set by USDA for federally inspected poultry products. □

### *Which potatoes are real?*

The potato in the foreground is a plastic model; the one to the right of it is plaster of Paris. The rest are real.



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## COVER STORY

February brings death to the Chicago stockyards. Now the industry looks to its changing future. See pages 2 to 7.

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